

Life Saver! What can we learn from Portland Oregon?

PG 6



Mouthwatering Pasta Salad

PG 8



Artist as Activist: The End of a Two Year Chapter.

PG 16



AUGUST 5TH - 18TH 2011 ISSUE 205

STREETVIBES

ADVOCATING JUSTICE • BUILDING COMMUNITY



Can Cincinnati Protect the Homeless from Deadly Weather?

Severe weather has raced through the Greater Cincinnati area in the past few months, including tornadoes, severe thunderstorms, flooding, and extreme heat.

But not all local residents live inside and many face greater danger of not being warned in time of impending severe weather threats. Local emergency officials say there is little they are able to do to warn those living outside.

JESSE CALL
Streetvibes Intern Writer

Federal, state, and local agencies in the area all struggled to answer the question of how best to warn people experiencing homelessness living outside.

"It's a good question," said Mike Kurhz, meteorologist with the local office of the National Weather Service in Wilmington, Ohio.

Kurhz said the only resource available from the National Weather Service is the NOAA Weather Radio service, which sends text and voice alerts during severe weather and other emergencies. However, people must be able to purchase a NOAA Weather Radio on their own, which range in cost from \$20 to \$60.

Some people living on the streets, under bridges, or in the woods do not have the resources to invest that amount on a weather radio. Yet, they are often living in the places where getting early warning is most crucial.

Josh Spring, executive director of the Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless, showed *Streetvibes* where some people experiencing homelessness in Hamilton County live in outdoor camps.

Many of these camps were located under bridges and overpasses, which many feel is a safe location

to be during a severe thunderstorm or tornado. However, the National Weather Service says nothing could be farther from the truth.

Underpasses provide an extreme danger during a tornado because they more easily expose people to flying debris, and winds are actually strengthened as they pass under a bridge, according to the National Weather Service.

Nonetheless, emergency officials in the area are reluctant to take on the responsibility of warning individuals living in these places.

"Clermont County encourages all citizens to be self prepared," Beth Nevel, director of the Clermont County Emergency Management Agency, said. She refers people to a brochure which she said is widely distributed throughout the county, but not through any programs specifically targeting people experiencing homelessness in the county.

Across the river in Northern Kentucky, the sentiment of self-preparedness is echoed by statewide officials.

"Every individual has a level of responsibility to be aware of their risk and prepared and have plans to protect themselves and mitigate those risks," Buddy Rogers, spokesperson for the Kentucky Division of Emer-

gency Management, said. He also suggested that residents in Kentucky purchase NOAA weather radios, and when warnings are issued, to seek shelter indoors.

Photo: FEMA

Large, open buildings like this Kentucky factory may be closest shelter to people living outdoors but the National Weather Service says they offer little protection during severe storms because they are so open.



However, many people living outside do not live near shelters or public buildings. And both Rogers in Kentucky and Kurhz in Ohio said they were unaware of any programs that provide free or low-cost NOAA weather radios to people experiencing homelessness, but said that local emergency management agencies or charities would offer the best chance of providing assistance, if any.

Back in Hamilton County, the people *Streetvibes* encountered living in camps did not have any NOAA weather radios, though some had regular battery-powered AM/FM radios. However, many radio stations in the region do not broadcast all NOAA weather alerts on their stations, unlike local TV news channels that can do so without interrupting programming and have their own weather departments. No one had a television, let alone electricity, in the Hamilton County camps *Streetvibes* visited.

Aside from not having a clear

warning system in their camps, the sheriff's office says there is no policy to specifically warn those in camps or living outside, or even check on them after the fact.

"The Sheriff's Office Patrol Section is occasionally dispatched to and have checked on reports of homeless individuals who may be in need of assistance or requests to check on the welfare of the homeless," Stephen Barnett, public information officer for the Hamilton County Sheriff's Department said, "but to my knowledge we have never had a set policy that addresses a protocol for any type of notification to specific areas within the unincorporated areas of the county for severe weather."

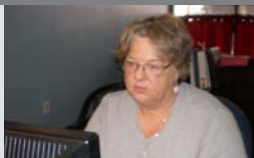
One reason for a lack of policy could be a lack of resources for the Sheriff's Department.

"With a limited amount of resources...on the street at any one given time the county wide sirens and media service have always been our best early warning signals," Barnett said. He did say that the patrol units do have a public address capability,

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Meeting Up with a Rebelious Nun

PG 10



Remembering The Grateful Dead

PG 13



New Approach to Poetry in Over-the-Rhine

PG 12



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Brief Updates

O hioans will be converging at John Boehner's office at 11 a.m. Tuesday, August 9 with a question in mind: "Where are the jobs, Speaker Boehner?" Buses will leave from Longworth Hall, 700 West Pete Rose Way, and IBEW hall, 5179 Fishwick Drive, and travel to Boehner's office at 7969 Cincinnati-Dayton Road in West Chester at 9:30 a.m. and 10 a.m. respectively. The event is being sponsored by Fight For A Fair Economy Cincinnati.

Vouchers are being distributed for the PETS IN NEED basic health clinics which are offered two Sundays each month at the UCAN Spay/Neuter Clinic. The clinic is located at 1230 West Eighth Street. The program is a joint effort of UCAN and the Freestore FoodBank. Only a limited number of vouchers are available for each clinic date, and you must have a voucher for each pet. Please call (513) 762-0149 to hear recorded information about vouchers. Vouchers are distributed, when available, on Fridays, 10 a.m., to 2 p.m., but it's best to call to get updates before you make the trip. Upcoming clinic dates are August 14 and 28, and September 11 and 25. REMEMBER TO CALL (513) 762-0149 FOR CLINIC DETAILS AND UPDATES. Generally, pets receive an examination, vaccinations and treatment for fleas and any minor health problems. You get information about "fixing" your pet and information about pet health.



Winning Hearts and Minds



Thus far, 2011 has been an interesting year for *Streetvibes*. Editors have gone, editors have come and gone again, editors have been nameless phantoms, and now it is my honor to be your editor. Despite some changes one thing has remained consistent with *Streetvibes*, its dedication to social justice, building community and providing economic opportunities for the paper's distributors. We thank you for supporting this dedication with your purchase of the paper that you are now reading.

So what course will the paper take under this new pilot? The primary focus of *Streetvibes* will always be on issues that affect people in Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky who are experiencing life without a home. The paper's progressive mission will continue to expose the unethical practices of those who would diminish affordable housing and social services while also celebrating the efforts of those who seek to help relieve the situation and ensure a safe home for everyone.

When working for social justice one is constantly exposed to the mistreatment of those lacking the resources to protect themselves and the corruption of those motivated by power and greed. Frequently it is a saddening and very frustrating calling, our "bleeding hearts" hemorrhage from the emotional trauma of feeling compassion and empathy for people in need of assistance. This frustration can easily turn to anger and then the name calling begins. In our aggravation we dig in for political battle and seek to defeat our enemies. In many situations it is a civic battle that is worthy of being fought, but with it comes those who get caught in the crossfire of rhetorical missiles. American politics of the 21st century have become extremely polarized, everyone seems angry at something and desperately trying to find someone to blame for it. We fight with those who's mission differs from our own and even squabble with those who share the same viewpoint.

"If you're not outraged, then you're not paying attention," stated a bumper sticker with which I heartily agree, but it is very difficult to convince someone of your viewpoint by shouting at them. Brute force offers the short term result of compliance through fear but it does nothing for the long term goal of winning the hearts and minds of people. Calm and confident, *Streetvibes* will always seek to reach out to the public of Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky to educate, inform and challenge people's perceptions of those without homes.

There is, however, also more to *Streetvibes*. Despite our unveiled dissatisfaction with many unjust policies and practices that occur in Cincinnati, we love this place, it is our home, and we want to see everyone be able to enjoy the Queen City. Our mission of community building extends in many different directions such as music, poetry, literature, film, and other performing arts. Expect to see more about the fringe entertainment and arts that Cincinnati has to offer.

To conclude my first *Streetvibes* editorial, I wish to extend an invitation to writers and artists who enjoy this paper and feel that they would like to contribute articles and art to help us continue to grow into the paper that is the heart of soul of the city, the vibe of the street.

Sincerely,
Jason Dean

Streetvibes is an activist newspaper, advocating justice and building community. *Streetvibes* reports on economic issues, civil rights, the environment, the peace movement, spirituality and the struggle against homelessness and poverty. Distributed by people who are or once were homeless, in exchange for a \$1 donation, *Streetvibes* is published biweekly by the Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless (GCCCH), a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that works to eradicate homelessness in Cincinnati.

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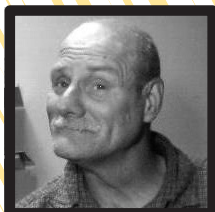
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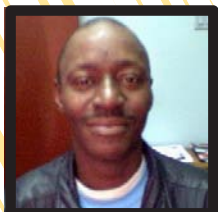
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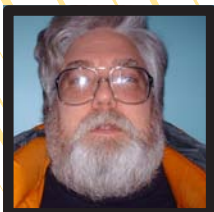
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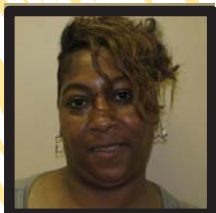
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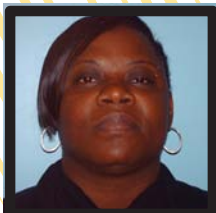
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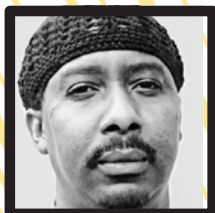
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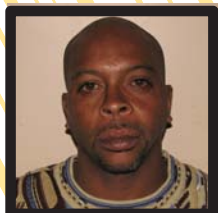
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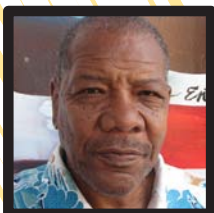
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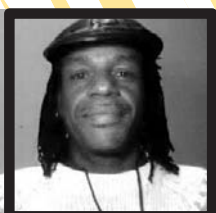
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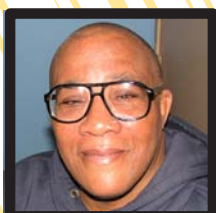
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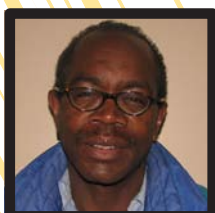
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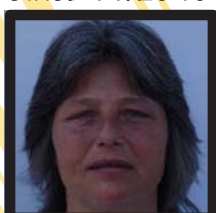
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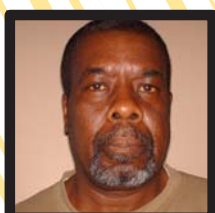
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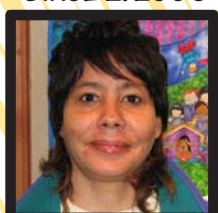
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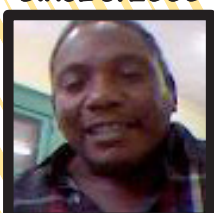
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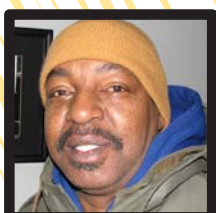
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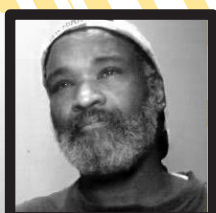
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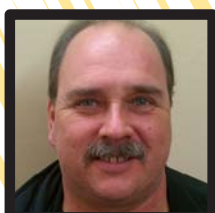
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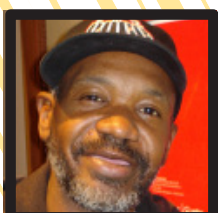
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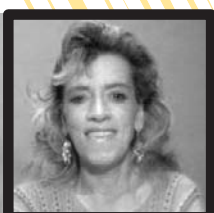
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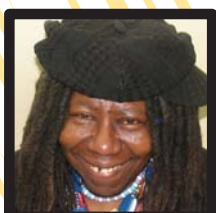
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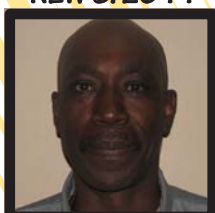
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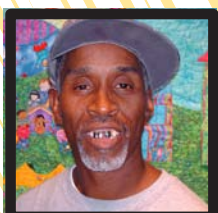
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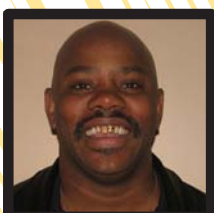
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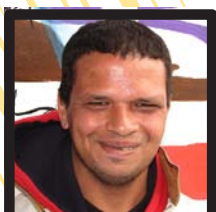
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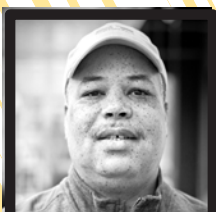
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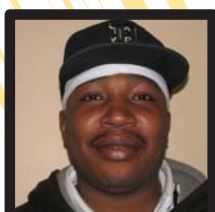
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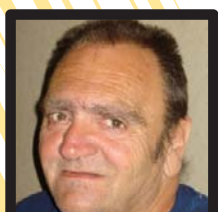
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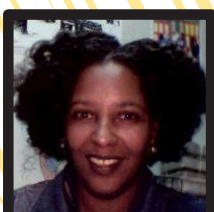
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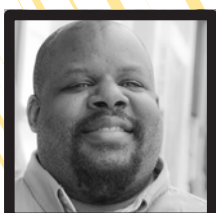
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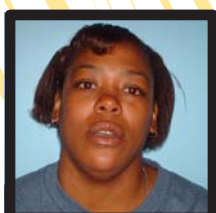
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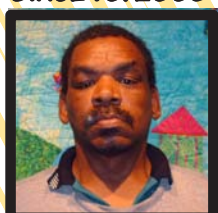
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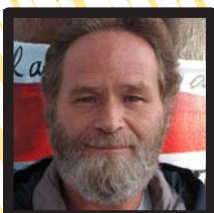
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My Distributor Is...

Many Streetvibes readers buy their copy of the paper from the person they consider to be their regular distributor. Every two weeks you walk by that same spot and look out for that friendly smile announcing that the latest issue of Streetvibes has arrived.

We would like to hear from you and publish your positive thoughts about the person from whom you pick up your copy of this paper. We invite you to write a line or two, starting with the phrase "My distributor is," that describes your Streetvibes distributor.

Please email your observations to streetvibes@cincihomeless.org

My Streetvibes distributor is **Julie Walker** and I look forward to seeing her every Saturday morning when I go to Findley Market. I arrive by 8:30 a.m. and get a newspaper and a hug from Julie. We talk about the weather or cooking or family for a minute, and then I get a cup of coffee in the market house and read the paper. Not sure what I like best, the paper or the hug. What a great way to start a Saturday with a kind word from Julie, a hug, a great newspaper and a cup of coffee.

Yesterday morning I got a late start and didn't arrive till 2 p.m. I couldn't find Julie as she had left for the day but I had a chance to meet Willa Jones, another lovely lady and Streetvibes contributing writer and distributor. She told me that there is an important article in the paper about House Bill 159 and how it could hurt many homeless folks as they may not be able to vote. We had a great political conversation and then I was on my way.

Every distributor has been a joy to talk to, and the paper always has great articles
Thanks
Jean Sepate

Five Extra Ways to Support Streetvibes Distributors.

(Concept borrowed from our sister paper in Portland, Oregon).

1. Traveling out of town? Buy extra copies of *Streetvibes* for the road. Who knows. Someone might notice the paper at the airport, bus station or on the road trip and strike up a great conversation.

2. Let out of town friends and family know about *Streetvibes* and the concept behind it. Let them know how it helps homeless and formerly homeless distributors pay for some basics.

3. Hydrate. Hydrate. Hydrate. Consider asking your distributor if they would like a bottle of cold water. Water helps keep the hydrated and strong.

4. Buy additional copies of *Streetvibes* and introduce the organization to at least one friend or Cincinnati newcomer. You can help spread the word and also raise awareness of progressive issues in Cincinnati.

5. Stop and talk to your neighborhood *Streetvibes* distributor. Introduce yourself and let her/him know what you like and don't like about the paper. This helps build community throughout the city, but more importantly, helps build what could become a lasting friendship.

Storm Warning

Continued from page 1

but that is probably not used often because the sheriff's department is busy responding to reported emergencies during a storm, such as downed power lines, storm damage and lost traffic signals.

In Kentucky, Rogers agreed that many local communities probably do not have the financial resources to send people out to warn or check on people living outdoors.

He also mentioned outdoor emergency sirens as a resource for those living outside. However, he admitted these sirens cannot be heard in all parts of a community, including some of the remote places where people experiencing homelessness sometimes stay.

A map of the tornado sirens in Kenton County, Kentucky, provided online by its emergency management agency, shows that most of them are in the heavily-populated residential parts of the county, despite the sirens being designed to warn people outdoors, not indoors.

Few people living outdoors wanted to be quoted in the article, but some showed us their homes. Living in the woods or under bridges, they often had a tent or a small shack made of wood they had found or been given.

These homes provide little shelter from the elements, including severe weather like heavy rains or hail, as well as from extreme heat or cold.

Adequate warning can allow them to escape to someplace safer or better prepare, Rogers said. However, Rogers said there are no known cases of anyone in a homeless camp suffering injury during a severe thunderstorm warning or tornado in Kentucky.

However, flash flooding is what often causes the most deaths due to severe weather in the Commonwealth. And, emergency managers rarely use outdoor sirens to warn of flash flooding, relying instead on NOAA weather radios and local media, to which many experiencing homelessness along riverbanks may not have access.

- Seek shelter indoors, if possible, in a storm cellar or basement. If no basement is available, seek shelter in a small room in the center of the lowest level of the building. Stay away from windows, doors, and corners or the room.
- Avoid seeking shelter in large shopping centers, stores, warehouses or anywhere that is "one big room," because you want to be in a small, enclosed room in case the roof is ripped off the building.
- A vehicle, trailer or mobile home does not provide good protection. Plan to go quickly to a building with a strong foundation, if possible.
- If shelter is not available, lie flat in a ditch or other low-lying area. Do not get under an overpass or bridge. You are safer in a low, flat location.
- Plan to stay in the shelter location until the danger has passed.

Sources: Federal Emergency Management Agency, National Weather Service Wilmington Office

To Be Set Free

JOSH SPRING
GCCH Director

Truth. Truth is so valuable. Most of us have heard the verse in the Bible that explains "Then you will know the truth and the truth will set you free." (John 8:32, NIV). We have heard this statement in movies, read it in books, heard it exclaimed in speeches. If any of us of have been to many rallies, probably many of us have cheered to something like this statement. But what does it mean- "...the truth will set you free?" What will the Truth set you free from?

Certainly within one's self the Truth will set one free from lies- in terms of their own mind set. But there has to be more to it than that. The first part of that sentence, the part that is not often quoted, says "Then you will *know* the truth..." So one must *know* the Truth in order to be set free by the Truth. I think that in this case *know* means more than

just a factual understand, I would assert that know in this case means to not only understand, but to take to hear, to be intimate with.

So if you *know* the Truth, what does it mean to be set free? In fact if considered only from a micro sense, one might think the opposite is actually true, often once one understands the Truth, she or he is no longer free- at least no longer free to live as they formerly would have. Often this is because Truth, when *known* compels one to act accordingly- this means to change the way one does things, this means to stand for the Truth and to fight for the Truth- to be bound by it you my say and to defend it. In some cases this leads to persecution, imprisonment or even death for those defending Truth. So what about freedom.

I think there is a certain freedom found within those that *know*, defend and operate according to the Truth- an inner release from all the lies society, politicians, developers, media, ceos, etc. want us to believe.

Beyond this however, and probably more important, I am not sure that freedom in this case is something that is completely immediate. It is important to consider all of this in a macro sense- if we *know* the Truth it will set us free. If we as a people become intimate with the Truth, and we let it determine our actions- then we will be set free. To me this means when we realize that all humans are worth of love and everything it takes to live because all humans are terribly valuable and when we realize that we are to protect each other and care for and protect our earth and all natural things- then we *know* the Truth- and will be set free.

I often see people disregard the Truth. In the immediate situation it may often seem easier to not operate within or defend Truth. In the immediate sense it may be easier to shake the hand of the oppressor and act like their friend than to tell them they are the oppressor. In the immediate sense it may be easier to

Continued on page 5



Friends of the Anna Louise Inn Call to Action

Ways Individuals and Organizations can Support the Continued Mission of the Anna Louise Inn

- Share our story. Talk at parties, tell your neighbors, post on your Facebook page, Twitter feed, and LinkedIn page. Make your voice known through outreach to your personal contacts.
- Sign the Statement of Support (or draft your own).
- Encourage people to visit www.cinunionbethel.org where they will get updated information and opportunities to donate.
- 'Like' Cincinnati Union Bethel on Facebook and follow us on Twitter @cinunionbethel and encourage all your friends to do the same.
- Send letters to the editor.
- Donate.
- Tell us who else may want to be involved-individuals and/or organizations.
- Attend the August 10th court hearing at 11 a.m. in Judge Norbert Nadel's courtroom at the Hamilton County Courthouse, 1000 Main St., Room 560. This is a hearing for Cincinnati Union Bethel's motion to dismiss the lawsuit.

Cincinnati Union Bethel – 300 Lytle St. – Cincinnati, OH 45202 – 768-6907 – www.cinunionbethel.org

Insurance Giant Bullies Anna Louise Inn

 **JASON DEAN**
Streetvibes Editor

After continuous failed attempts to purchase the Anna Louise Inn, Western & Southern Financial Group now wants Cincinnati City Council to withhold \$2.6 million in federal housing dollars allocated to renovate this historic Cincinnati shelter for women and families. The Inn, currently administered by the nonprofit group Cincinnati Union Bethel, stands in the way of the insurance firms plans to convert the coveted building into expensive condominiums; part of an overarching design to gentrify the Lytle Park neighborhood into a “gaslight district” surrounded by luxury housing, restaurants and boutiques.

Western & Southern claim that the renovation plan of the Anna Louise Inn is inappropriate and that the shelter is not conducive to the neighborhood even though it has stood on that spot since opening in 1909. Western & Southern are playing the role of victim, accusing the city council of pushing through the measure to award funds to

the nonprofit without a public hearing, but despite this the council appears to favor charity and compassion over acquiescing to big business interests.

Western & Southern is stalling for time in the hopes that Cincinnati Union Bethel will accept their \$3 million offer for the Inn and promises to help find a new home for families and the women who currently reside there. To date, however, Cincinnati Union Bethel are not interested in selling their property that was donated by Charles P. Taft and that they have successfully operated for the past 102 years. For over a century the Inn has offered short term-housing

for women and families experiencing homelessness. Some need the shelter due to low-income, some are escaping abuse, and some are trying to rid

themselves from drugs or prostitution. The Inn offers help to many women and families seeking to improve their situation and find stability.

In the coming months the Anna Louise



The historic and much coveted Anna Louise Inn . *Photo: Kevin LeMaster*

Inn will start its \$12.5 million renovation project to modernize the building and create 85 efficiency apartments to replace the current dormitories. Western & Southern have argued that this move would actually provide less

housing for the homeless; one argument amongst many that the property developers are throwing out against the non-profit organization.

The most striking thing about this story is the audacity of Western & Southern's claims. They move into the neighborhood three generations after the Inn opened and then claim that the shelter is not appropriately placed. They complain and threaten to sue when Cincinnati Union Bethel refuses to sell their property. Many people would laugh at Western & Southern, but be warned, when a lucrative financial institution has its sights set on something they will not back down. The successful Anna Louise Inn needs all the help the people of Cincinnati can give to ensure that this historic shelter does not become history.



Ten Facts about the Anna Louise Inn and Western & Southern

Fact #1: The Anna Louise Inn was built in 1909 to provide safe and affordable housing for women. We have been in the Lytle Park district for 102 years and the neighborhood has successfully developed around us – serving women in need does not impede economic development. In fact, Western & Southern developed the Residence Inn knowing the Inn was across the street.

Fact #2: The Anna Louise Inn serves the same purpose today as it did when it opened in 1909 ... to provide safe and affordable housing for women. We still do this. We have continued to respond to the needs of women. Of course, our residents' circumstances have changed as society has changed, but women still need a safe and affordable home and that is what we still provide.

Fact #3: Cincinnati Union Bethel received the number one ranking in its category from the Ohio Housing Finance Agency and was awarded tax credits to renovate the Anna Louise Inn on July 1, 2010. The renovation will preserve the historic elements of the building internally and externally.

Fact #4: When Cincinnati Union Bethel was exploring all options from 2005-2009, Western & Southern made two offers: \$1.75 and \$1.8 million. We now have a \$12.6 million renovation project in hand.

Fact #5: Western & Southern cut off negotiations about the Anna Louise Inn in 2009 and only tried to resume them after they learned that we had received \$10 million in tax credits and \$2.6 million in affordable housing (HOME loan) dollars to renovate the Inn. At that time, we were not entertaining offers.

Fact #6: The \$10 million in tax credits the Anna Louise Inn received are from a **federal** program specifically designated to support affordable housing. It provides an opportunity for investment for local corporations. The \$2.6 million HOME loan funding granted by the city is money from HUD that brings funding INTO the city that requires only a small match. Both programs are win-wins for economic development. The tax credits are “use them or lose them” and we cannot use them in another location. If we don't use the tax credits they do not go back into taxpayers' pockets and the economic stimulus provided to our community will be lost.

Fact #7: Western & Southern has used the same tax credit program on its projects, like Brackett Village. It was a good financing program for Western & Southern then and it is a good financing program for us now.

Fact #8: Western & Southern offered Brackett Village to Cincinnati Union Bethel as a new location for the Anna Louise Inn. It had two major problems: (1) each residence has a separate entrance so we could not provide the same level of safety and sense of community for women, and (2) there are people living there who would have been displaced from their residence.

Fact #9: It is not cheaper to move locations. (1) Our programs are not going to change. (2) As City Gospel Mission and the YWCA have shown, there is often community resistance for social service providers in finding new locations. (3) Our current location is ideal for our residents because it is close to Cincinnati jobs and Northern Kentucky jobs. It is close to a bus line, a park and downtown stores and restaurants.

Fact #10: We own the Anna Louise Inn and we have a right, as homeowners, to make decisions about our home's future. We don't have to sell to someone just because they want our land. We merely want to continue serving women in need and consider the solution we have found to be an enormous win-win for our community.

For more information, please visit www.cinunionbethel.org, or call 513-768-6907.

To Be Set Free, Continued

look the other way when a group that has a lot of power says they will swing some of that power your way while on the other side they are still hurting people. It may be easier to not call out Truth in a meeting and keep things immediately calm- without considering what negative actions will be reaped upon other people after the meeting. The Truth is however, even though these actions may seem calm and freeing in the moment- they will never free us. Shaking hands with lies enslaves us, *knowing* and defending Truth sets us free.



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A Lifesaver that Fits in Your Pocket

In Portland, Oregon, a little red bag is helping the homeless to stay alive. The Vial of Life has a list of medical illnesses, prescriptions, emergency contacts, allergies and blood type – all to be available to medical staff in case of emergency.

STACY BROWNHILL
Street Roots (USA)
www.streetnewsservice.org

How much good can a small red pouch, zip tie and sheet of paper do for someone living on the streets? Turns out, a lot.

Downtown Chapel is pioneering an innovative, potentially life-saving program for medically vulnerable people experiencing homelessness called the Vial of Life program. It's actually an adaptation of a nationally established program used by people who have homes, applied now to those who do not.

Homeless participants can fill out a one-page sheet listing medical illnesses, prescriptions, emergency contacts, allergies and blood type, stuff it into a red plastic pouch no bigger than an index card, and attach it to their backpack. The "vial" provides an easily identifiable, relatively reliable record to emergency personnel, and Downtown Chapel keeps a copy in case the original is lost.

Since June, around 40 homeless individuals have participated in the Vial of Life program at Downtown Chapel, meeting one-on-one for a few minutes with volunteer nursing students from University of Portland who help them fill out medical information and even call pharmacies if there are questions about prescriptions.

Reviews by participants have been "over the moon," says Andrew Noethe, pastoral associate at Downtown Chapel who is overseeing the implementation of the Vial of Life program in collaboration with parish nurse Sharon Christenson. Participant Michelle says she recommends it to other friends on the street who have seizures or diabetes and thinks there should be "a lot more awareness" about the Vial of Life program.

So far, people seem eager to sign up for the program. "When you're vulnerable and sick, you know it," says Michelle.

Diabetes, seizures and cognitive disabilities are at the top of the list of health issues that the Vial of Life program hopes to track. The health record may be largely self-reported, but the volunteer nursing students at Downtown Chapel "help ask the

right questions in a safe place," says Noethe. "Sometimes a participant will just open their bag and show a nurse all the pills they've been taking, and that's helpful if EMTs pick that person up," he says.

Piloted with Northwest Parish Nurse Ministries and Providence Health Systems, the Vial of Life program is an enormous boon for homeless health care in Portland.

People who are homeless are often mobile, without health insurance, especially vulnerable to injuries and illness, and prime candidates for reduced recollection, often the result of past trauma or head injuries.

Emergency personnel, including EMTs, police and Central City Concern's CHIERS staff, are frequently forced to rely on guesswork when it comes to helping sick people on the streets.

For instance, last year more than 8,400 inebriated people were picked up off the streets and taken to Hooper Sobering Center on NE Burnside and MLK. "One of the first questions asked is, 'do you have any medical conditions,'" says manager Steve Mattsson. But he admits that the homeless folks who come in are notoriously poor historians of medical history. Plus, alcohol can mask over many serious medical issues.

"I meet first responders who wonder, 'did I make the right choice?'" says Noethe, who hopes the Vial of Life program will change that.

"The bottom line is we need to make sure those in need - however that is defined - get the right help in an emergency," says Jean Marks with Providence Health & Service's Public Relations office. "Emergency responders seem to be excited about this program because it makes their job easier. They don't have to guess about their patients' allergies and prescriptions," says Marks. "It serves the poor and vulnerable, but it also helps everyone do a better job."

Bruce Strade, executive director of Northwest Parish Nurse Ministries, says they are just getting a feel for how successful the program is, but thinks adapting the program for other agencies is "not out of our reach."

Downtown Chapel's idea for the Vial of Life program originated from



Michelle is one of the people that benefits from the Vial of Life.

Photo courtesy of Street Roots

Northwest Parish Nurse Ministries' and Providence Health Systems' Vial of L.I.F.E. (Lifesaving Information for Emergencies) program - a traditional method of storing medical information of isolated elders' in readily identifiable pill bottles in refrigerators.

Early this year, parish nurse Sharon Christenson asked, 'why not do this in the homeless community?' and approached Noethe with the idea of implementing the Vial of Life program at Downtown Chapel. Noethe says he immediately took to the idea, remembering times when homeless guests passed out mysteriously in Downtown Chapel's lobby.

He is especially hopeful that the program will help guests with trauma history, including traumatic brain injuries, who cannot recall medical history.

"They don't always keep every-

thing in mind," says Michelle, who is borderline diabetic combined with other medical issues. "And if (medics) don't know about it, that's a problem."

Noethe agrees. "It is essential that first responders, especially in Old Town, are able to identify the Vial of Life pouches and make use of them," says Noethe.

His plan forward is to replicate the Vial of Life program among other Portland service agencies. Noethe has even created a manual for other organizations to implement and evaluate the program.

"I have no doubt this is going to benefit someone," says Noethe. "With Vial of Life, we're not doing case work where we follow people over time, and we won't always get to see the outcomes."

"But I know this will improve lives."

National News Summary

JESSE CALL
Staff Intern Writer

In Fullerton, California, a man suffering from schizophrenia and experiencing homelessness was beaten to death by police. Kelly Thomas, 37, died five days after being put on life support. His family said they could not even recognize him after the beating. Officers say that Thomas resisted arrest and they used an appropriate amount of force to detain Thomas, who was suspected of breaking into cars. Thomas was not armed and was described by the *Los Angeles Times* as being "slight

and of medium height." Witnesses say police continued to hit Thomas with the butts of their flashlight even after he stopped moving. His family says the force used was clearly excessive. Orange County prosecutors are investigating, but no charges have been filed.

Secret Service agents continue to search for the ringleaders behind a bogus check cashing scheme which has exploited people experiencing homelessness and with mental disabilities throughout the state of Arkansas, according to *The*

Jonesboro Sun. A man arrested for trying to cash the check at an Arkansas bank said that he was offered \$100 to attempt to cash it. Several more cases came forward throughout the state. Secret Service agents say they are close to finding the producers of the counterfeit checks and they will be charged with federal crimes.

Hawaii officials say there is no plan to force people experiencing homelessness out of the area where the leaders of 21 nations, including President Barack Obama, will meet for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) conference. State legislators have asked that there be an effort to move people

in homelessness from the area. A hearing was held earlier at the state capitol to discuss the possibility of creating "safe zones," or tent cities, where homeless people could stay in order to help keep streets clean for the dignitaries. "Let me explain or put it this way. You invite some guests into your home for a meeting, you're not going to have your home in shambles," State Representative John Mizuno told *HawaiiNewsNow*. The "safe zones" plan met opposition from homeless advocates and community leaders and has not yet been accepted.

[Continued on Page 7]

Street Papers Divided on Campaign to Make Poverty Illegal

Could poverty be made illegal worldwide, just as torture and other human rights abuses have been?

MELANY BENDIX
The Big Issue (South Africa)
www.streetnewsservice.org

It's a radical concept, and one that's being vociferously debated at the International Network of Street Papers (INSP) annual conference following a call by Henrique Pinto, from CAIS street paper in Portugal, for street papers to support his campaign to make poverty illegal.

What at first seems like an idealistic, never-achievable "dream" goal gains some weight when you consider that once slavery was legal, and it took a radical mindshift and support from a critical mass to make it illegal. There are countless examples of these shifts that throughout history, so why is it so inconceivable that poverty, like slavery, could one day be outlawed?

As Pinto points out, like torture,

genocide and other human rights abuses, "poverty is a serious violation of the most basic human rights".

And, like slavery, "poverty is man-made - it is not a natural phenomena", Pinto argues.

He makes a passionate, weighty argument, but I'm not (yet) convinced this is a realistic campaign, nor one that street papers around the world, which have a combined readership of five to seven million an edition, should use their considerable power in the media to drive on a global level.

It's a grand ideal, but as Trudy Vlok, MD of *The Big Issue* SA, pointed out: If poverty is made illegal, that automatically means it's a criminal offence to cause poverty. But who or even what causes poverty is not always clear-cut, so who do you lay criminal charges against for causing poverty?

Pinto reckons the buck stops with governments, which should be forced by their people to commit to goals to alleviate poverty. Should they not meet those goals, he believes they should be fined, as they do in the European Union when countries do not meet carbon emission reductions, for example. The money from the fine would then be put into a fund for poverty alleviation.

There's an immediate issue here: if governments have to pay a fine, the money will simply be taken from the taxpayer's coffer, which has its obvious problems.

Fining governments for breaking agreements also has its own set of problems; it's a slap on the wrist which they mostly shrug off and then go straight back to doing what they were doing before. Getting governments to seriously sign in on "dream" targets is equally tricky. Governments always seem to be all too happy to sign on

the dotted line when the cameras are clicking but, like we've seen with the overall implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, implementation is an entirely different story.

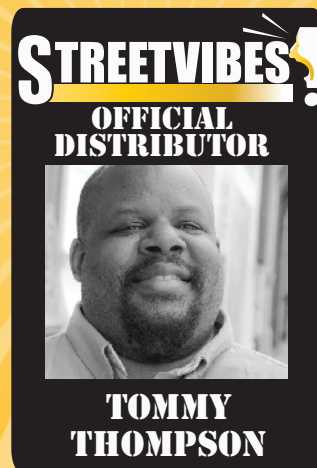
That said, no one - not even the passionate Pinto - is talking about making poverty illegal overnight. It would be a long-term campaign, at least 20 years. Who knows, over that time the glitches in the campaign for poverty to be made illegal could be ironed out. Perhaps in 50 or 100 years we'll even look back at this time and be amazed that poverty wasn't illegal.

Melany Bendix is editor of *The Big Issue South Africa*. She blogged from the INSP 2011 annual conference that took place in Glasgow from July 20 to 22. The INSP represents 113 papers from 40 countries. Follow her on Twitter: @melbendix

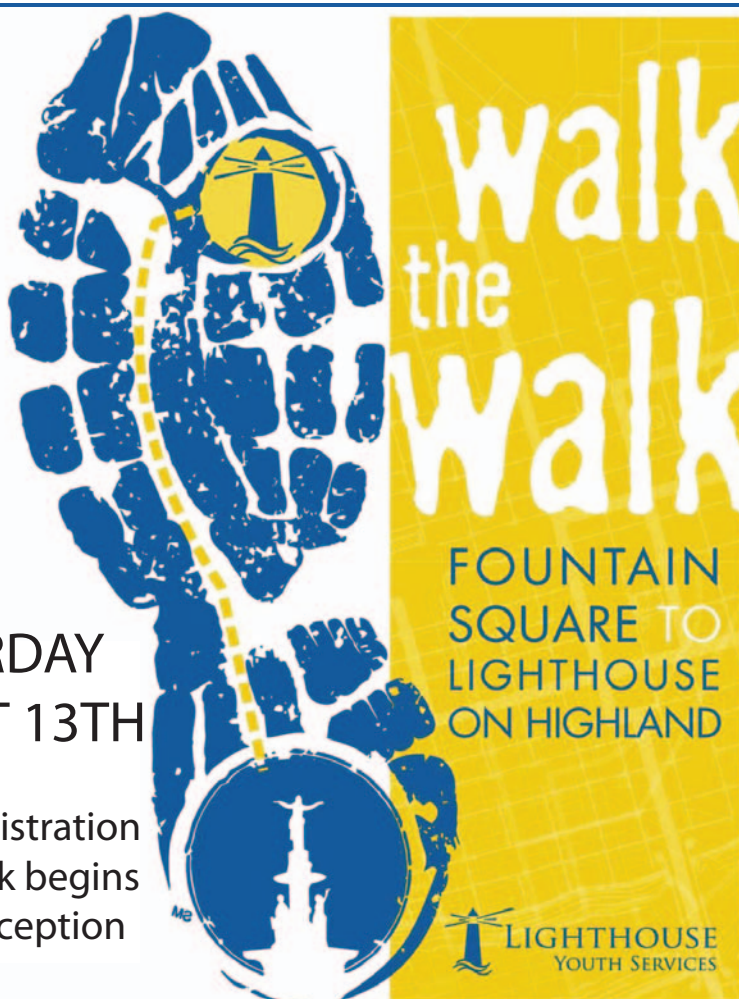
Say What?

"Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired, signifies in the final sense a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed."

Dwight D. Eisenhower
34th President and WWII Five Star General



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Lighthouse Youth Services provides a continuum of services for homeless youth, including Anthony House, a drop-in center for homeless youth between the ages 18 to 24. Visiting youth can eat a warm meal, visit the nurse, take a shower, and collect clothing and other vital supplies.

Our drop-in center was visited almost 4,000 times in the past year. The young people served by the program often walk miles just to eat a warm meal or visit their case managers, regardless of the weather.

Proceeds from Walk the Walk will provide the basic supplies - sturdy walking shoes, new socks, bus tokens, etc. - that make this daily trek possible.

Lighthouse on Highland is under construction to become the first homeless shelter for 18 - 24 year olds. It will include the current drop-in center and expand to allow up to 28 individuals to stay overnight. Participants of Walk the Walk will be among the first to preview the facility, scheduled to open this fall.

[National News Summary Continued from Page 6]

An Anchorage, Alaska man has been charged with several crimes after police say he took in a family experiencing homelessness and then sexually assaulted the underage daughters, KTUU reports. According to police, days after the family moved in, Keone Jason Lee began sexually abusing the two daughters, age 6 and 11, and threatened them with a sword if they told anyone about the abuse. Lee is already a registered sex offender in Alaska and is being held on \$100,000 bail.

A talented singer has gotten quite a following on YouTube and iTunes after releasing a few cover songs--however, this singer is currently experiencing homelessness in Denver, Colorado. David "Dred" Scott has been singing on the streets of Denver to earn money, but after teaming up with His Love Street ministries, he got a stage to perform to the world online, *Time Magazine* reports. He recorded an album there, "Live from the 16th Street Mall," and made \$2,000 in two days on iTunes. He is debuting new songs next month and says he hopes to make a "decent living" from his music.



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FEED ME SEYMOUR...
FEED ME ALL NIGHT LONG!
BY JENI JENKINS

The title of this column is taken from the 1986 film "Little Shop of Horrors," where a plant keeper must meet the demands of a ravenous plant that feeds on humans. Instead of plants that feed on people, this column is for people who feed on plants!!



PIQUANT PASTA SALAD

Fresh Summer Salad!

During the summer as the heat rises I find it difficult to eat a heavy dinner, so the perfect solution is something fresh from your garden or a local farmer's market. I personally love salads and in particular I love the ability to mix it up a bit each time using a variety of ingredients. Here is the fourth from my fresh summer salad series I hope you enjoy! Serving size, 4-5 bellies.

Ingredients:

4 cups cooked shell pasta, rinsed
2 teaspoons dried basil
1 clove garlic, minced
1/4 cup Extra-virgin olive oil
4 tablespoons balsamic vinegerette
1 cup quartered cherry tomatoes
1 red onion, chopped
1 red bell pepper, chopped
1/2 cup shredded parmesan romano & asiago Cheese mix
1 cup mozzarella, cut in cubes
Salt & pepper to taste

- In a large bowl combine the pasta, tomatoes, red pepper and onion and gently mix together
- In a separate small bowl combine the basil, garlic, olive oil, vinegar and salt and pepper
- Toss with the pasta
- Stir in the mozzarella & top with shredded cheese
- Voila, FEED!

Say What?

"Anyone who has struggled with poverty knows how extremely expensive it is to be poor."

*James Baldwin (1924-1987)
American writer.*

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The “Abandomeniums” of Over-the-Rhine

SUSAN LAKES
Streetvibes Staff Writer

As Over-the-Rhine’s facelift continues, “abandomeniums,” those vacant parcels that attract the desperate, disappear.

There’s a lot of renovation going on in Over-the-Rhine, and that is limiting the number of places for visitors to drop out of sight and take cover inside dilapidated buildings.

One person, Nate, knows what it feels like to be afraid inside one of the abandoned or uninhabited buildings. The thought of rats scares him. So does the thought of strangers wondering in or police busting in, crying “trespassing.” All the noise is scary. But the deafening silence can be bad, too.

Nate spent a few nights on and off for six months in a local shelter, but left there and took up residence inside one of the city’s vacant buildings. Building Cincinnati website shows that there were 5,183 condemned or abandoned buildings a few months ago. That figure represented a 10.8% increase from the previous year and a 190% increase in the past five years.

But for Nate, who lives in Over-the-Rhine, the statistics don’t matter. He watches bulldozers and other heavy equipment chip away at restoration projects, including the big one at the now barricaded park.

All the activity won’t erase the memories of abandomium living.

“It’s scary. You sleep in there and don’t know about the rats, or if someone else is there who might try to harm you, and if the police will come in and bust you for trespassing,” he said in a recent interview.

Last winter was his last time he took up residence in one of the buildings. He slept with his back up to the wall on a nasty dirty floor.

Fortunately, he picked a rodent-free one. “I didn’t see a rat, or I wouldn’t have stayed there. I wouldn’t have stayed there if I had heard one either.”

It was cold, though. “It’s colder inside the building than if you get outside,” he said about the harsh winter conditions, even underneath a roof. But the roof provided some relief from the chilly winds.

Some nights, the shelter conditions were unbearable, even though he was inside. Nate said all the trapped air made it feel cold, sometimes too cold to sleep.

So he moved elsewhere. “I would sometimes get in someone’s apartment building and sleep in the laundry room,” he said. “Forty degrees felt a lot better than 10 degrees outside.”

Sometimes, company showed up. “Other people would come in, but I stayed to myself and they did the same,” he said. No entertaining here—and no cooking either. Nate had no light or heat, and usually crept inside after dark to avoid detection. He slithered out before dawn.

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Sister of Rebellion

Meet Mary Beth Peters, SC. 51. Catholic nun. Social worker. Committed to the poor. Rebellious by temperament.

JIM LUKEN
Contributing Writer

Mary Beth Peters took her vows as a Sister of Charity at about the same time in 1985 that Our Daily Bread Soup Kitchen came into existence. She maintains regular contact with the woman who founded Our Daily Bread (ODB), Cookie Vogelwohl, and seems to enjoy sketching the history of the invaluable resource she now heads.

According to Mary Beth, Cookie was working in an office downtown, when out the window she noticed a man eating food out of a trash can. That night, disturbed by what she had seen, Cookie mentioned it to her aunt, saying something to the effect, "That shouldn't happen. Somebody should do something about it." Her aunt responded, "Well. You're somebody."

And indeed, Cookie Vogelwohl was somebody. Not long after that incident, she quit her job, and began cooking at home and bringing the food down in the evenings to St. Francis Seraph School. The first night there were 10-12 hungry folks who came to eat.

After sometime, Cookie found that the school was not the right place for what she wanted to do. The best time of day to operate a soup kitchen is at lunch time, and school kids were in the lunchroom every day at St. Francis.

Cookie's connections grew. She was able to raise the money to buy the spacious building at Race and Elder on the east end of Findlay Market. According to Mary Beth, this happened without many of the market shop

owners catching wind of it, and it was "much to their dismay" of many that Our Daily Bread became a prominent fixture there.

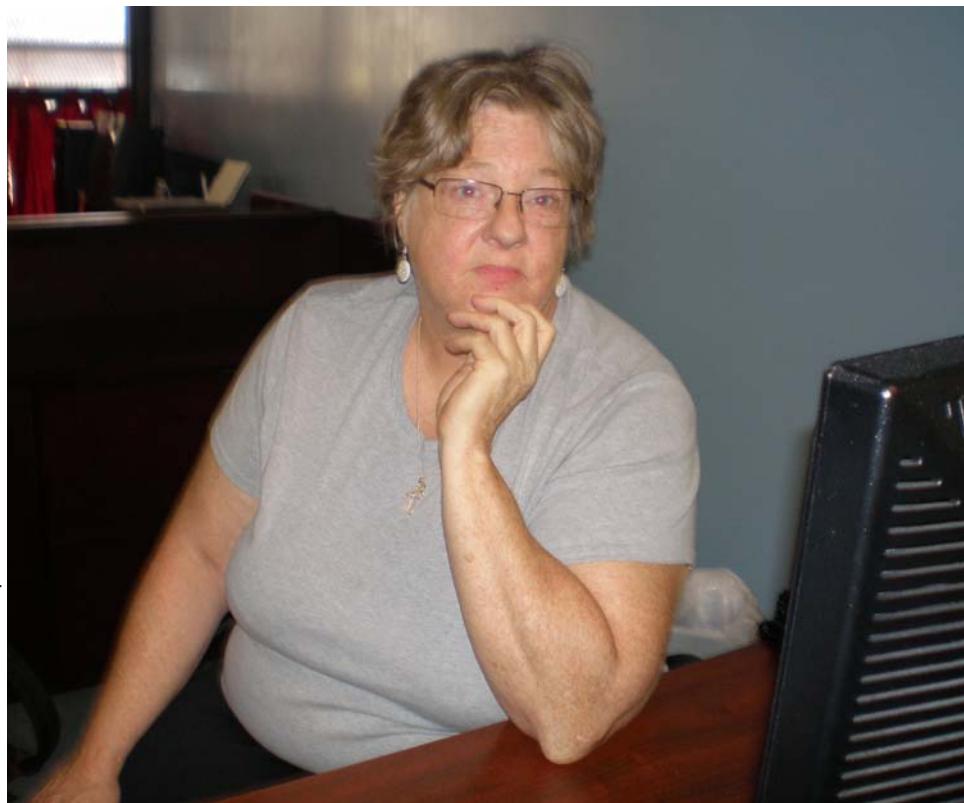
When Cookie retired, Mary Jo Holohan, the wife of ODB's first donor (Bill Holohan) took over the directorship. Sister Mary Beth came on board as Executive Director in 2005. The facility provides a complete meal (usually a salad, an entrée, several side dishes, coffee and desert) to 250 to 500, mostly adults (most of whom are men) five days a week. Understandably, Monday is usually the busiest day.

Mary Beth explains that there is now a yearly operating budget of \$650,000, with another \$200,000 coming in as food donations. She rattles off the figures: "85 % of our funding comes from private donations, with 15% from grants. We get nothing from the government, nothing from the city, nothing from United Way."

There is no bitterness when she says this. The generosity of individuals no doubt provides a degree of freedom from outside interference.

Sister Mary Beth Peters grew up in Finneytown, one of four children. "I was the scapegoat in an alcoholic family," she says. Rebellious from the beginning, she got in "a lot trouble," including doing drugs and alcohol while she was still in grade school. "I got it out of my system early," she says.

But not too early. The semi-wild behavior continued through high school at MacCauley and through her college years at Edgecliff College,



Sister Mary Beth Peters contemplates her work with the homeless. *Photo: Jim Luken*

where she earned her degree in social work. After college, she took on a variety jobs which included work in a Head Start program. She taught first grade for a year, and was the manager of a home for pregnant homeless

teens in Florida.

Then Mary Beth was hired into what would be a life changing

job for her, this at the St. Joseph Villa orphanage. As a live-in "unit counselor," she would work seven days straight, and then have the next four off. The situation was ideal for a young woman who had not yet even thought about becoming a nun. "You would work hard for a solid week and then you would go out and raise hell." She describes this as a time of "working hard and partying hard."

As fate (or grace) would have it, there were a number of Sisters of Charity working there at the orphanage. "They were peers and friends," says Mary Beth. "I was attracted to the Sisters of Charity because they were rebellious." The sisters invited the young woman into their circle, and a religious vocation, evolved from those connections.

"You reach a point in your life," she says, "when play time is over. You understand that there's got to be more to life." For 25 year-old Mary Beth Peters, "more" meant a calling, a vocation.

"It really appealed to me," she says now. "I never had the desire to be married and have kids. But I always wanted to work with kids and to work with the underprivileged."

At Our Daily Bread, there is plenty of interaction with the underprivileged, and even some contact with kids. The soup kitchen closes at 2:30 p.m. and three days a week a "Kids Café" is provided from 2:30 p.m. to five.

This is only one of a number of services that ODB provides, and Sister Mary Beth seems proud to list them. She points out that, while we are doing the interview, in the next room, a weekly women's group is meeting, shepherded by a volunteer, Judy Frankel, who happens to be a licensed psychologist, retired.

"We have bingo and movies. We have a nurse through the visiting nurses association. And we have a foot doctor. Any number of other agencies come in and use the facility with their clients who are also often regular 'guests' of the soup kitchen."

Our Daily Bread employs a full time social worker, "We have an open door policy," Sister Mary Beth says. The social worker helps people in various areas that are often complicated for the poor, like birth certificates and IDs. "We hold onto the important papers for many of our guests," she explains. "Otherwise they can be easily lost or stolen."

I ask her about the best part of her job. "People, no doubt," she says, laughing. "There's never a dull moment, and the same thing never happens twice." She shakes her head, aware that what she is saying is a coin with two sides. "Every day you see the hopelessness and tragedy of mental illness played out in everyday life."

Sister Mary Beth and her staff estimate that nearly 65% of their guests have mental issues of one kind or another. Although she works in an office off the main dining room, Mary Beth says she has lots of hands-on contact with the folks who dine in the lunchroom and others from the neighborhood. "I'm a smoker. So I go outside. I get to know them, call them by name."

When her work day is finished, Mary Beth Peters doesn't drive to the big Sisters of Charity convent at Mount Saint Joseph. Like many nuns these days, she lives in a suburban house with a community of three other women. She is the youngest. The oldest is 80. "There are 20 legs in the kitchen at night," she jokes. "The four of us and our three dogs."

I ask her for some closing thoughts. "I don't have any words of wisdom," she says briskly, intimating a bit of the old rebelliousness. But, in fact, she does have a few apt parting words.

"Hang on tight. Each day brings something. If you can't laugh, why even bother. And there's lots to laugh at, even the sad things. You either laugh or you cry."

Meet Up

Save the Date

PRAYER VIGIL

for the

Anna Louise Inn

Wednesday,
August 10th, 9:30am

WHEN: Prayer Vigil begins at 9:30am and the Court Hearing begins at 11:00am

WHERE: Hamilton County Courthouse, the steps on the Main Street side

Meetup is meant to tell people's stories in their own words. The views expressed in this column are solely those of the interviewee and not those of the Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless, *Streetvibes* or the staff, volunteers and board members.

Conditions of the Times

 **RICCARDO TAYLOR**
Staff Writer

When asked about the recession, the only response could be what recession? That one word which we all need to whisper has its effects on a majority of the people, as there is a group of us who have no idea of what recession they refer too? The recess of life has plagued us from times that we cannot even remember! In fact for many of us the times are ideal, as it allows us to watch, as people scamper to adjust their lives to the conditions we have lived under for a time. Yet, the tale of the tape, if you will, is predicated on something much broader than that. Let us take a look at what all the fuss is about.

All of a sudden, many people are caught up in financial distress, not knowing how to overcome, or too, manage the newly created woes caused by government "under sight," they find themselves in unfamiliar territory, at least where the power of the all mighty dollar is concerned.

That which has always been routine now becomes conditioned! Foreclosure, civil suit of non- payment, financial disaster kicking at your front door pushing you to the edge, makes you want to put a gun to your head! The pressure can be more then one can stand! Hard times, or are they? We have to take into account the reality of some people and that is to say the Street people.

Now here we are, facing all the hardship of economics, at least that's what they will have you

believe only for those who know and live the life style there is no real change, life goes on as usual you see because if you didn't have anything in the beginning then surely you cannot feel the pressure of losing what you have!

About a year ago someone asked me what do you think of the recession and before I weighed in on what was asked I answered with mischief what recession? I had no concept of losing what I didn't have so without consideration for what others may have lost I shrugged the question off. The nerve of that guy asking me about what I felt when I had been struggling over these past few years! I wasn't bothered by the recession in the least! You see for those of us who suffer from not having or at best those of us who are used to struggling for everything

we get there was no hardship! It's business as usual hustle or perish! Nothing had changed and I didn't have time for pity or empathy I had to get what I needed for the moment! For those of us who live the life of the street it's never a moment of question, it's do what you have to do! I realize that that

doesn't make a world of sense to many but think of it this way. When you are use to not having, or being without then it doesn't matter when you don't have. It's get what you can and don't worry about the rest! Of course I know every street person doesn't feel that way yet that's the norm for those of us who live this life style. Our worries only count or come along when we need what we need right now! A sad life indeed, yet that's the way of the world! Ah! Ah! We have to look from a street perspective, what reces-

STREET
LIFE



Riccardo Taylor. *Photo: GCCH*

sion? Too often we have to learn to live the way it comes to us, not giving a thought about what others feel but what is in it for us! So we take it on the chin sort to speak and just keep keeping on. Yet, somehow I know and I think we all believe that there is another way, or that there is some hope. The bottom line is that we have to live life on life's terms and get with the conditions of life.

Learn to Flow

 **E. HAYDEN**
Contributing Writer

I stopped in at the store to get some lo mein noodles and chicken for \$3.95. It's okay on a budget; the kinda food that will fill you up. I had my eye on this table in the corner but by the time I got my food and turned around two young giggling girls were sitting there. The only table left was one with this older man who was blowing his nose in a napkin; his clothing was very ragged looking and I noticed that he had a sandwich in a napkin. So I asked three older men, who were in the middle of a conversation, if I could sit down with them.

"Yes come on," they replied.

As I sat there the men at the table were discussing how Cincinnati is behind other cities in growth. I said that Cincinnati has a slave mentally,

we made it cross the river, that good enough or what do we do now, mind set generation after generation gap they don't improve beyond that...

"Where are you from?" one of the gentlemen asked me.

"Kentucky," I replied. He said

"You came from an environment that had good flow. You were made accountable and everything you did was working for you. You came to a place where people live in dark clouds, where people believe in oppression as an excuse for everything. The leaders here; all they do is talk, talk, with no action. Just keeping people soft, they stop believing in themselves. People are hurting people just to have something to prove how smart they are. So they can be the one you look up too. They need to remember respect is not earned; give freely. They need to be improving on themselves with book education, not street education. There are too many free programs in Cincinnati for you learn how to use a computer, building houses and learning how to use a camera for television." He kept talk-

ing about learning to listen to my inner-self and to be one with my inner-self.

"What is your inner-self?" I asked him

"That's your wisdom," he explained, "some people say common sense. It's from God. God gave everybody wisdom, but he also gave us free will."

As I listened I was thinking "honesty, since I left Kentucky, I feel like my inner-self has been slamming up against a wall for the last ten years I have lived in Cincinnati."

"This is the secret to making it in Cincinnati," he continued, "listen to me, and I am only going to tell you once okay? You have flow through "all oppression" of all the distraction that's in Ohio. When you see somebody that's not quite right, you can't let them stop your game (your flow). Stay on your goals. If you have to repeat your goals to yourself everyday, or write the down daily, to keep you going, do it. Pray every morning for peace for you and others around you to stay peaceful."

"Thank you," I said, "I will work on my flow."

make cincinnati weird Anarchy in the Queen City

In 1976, Johnny Rotten of British punk band The Sex Pistols declared, "I am an anti-Christ, I am an anarchist." But Cincinnati has London beat by 149 years. Meet Josiah Warren, the Queen City's number one anarchist guy!

Between 1827 and 1830, Warren ran The Cincinnati Time Store, a radical retail project in which the cost of products were tied to how much labor and time had been spent making the item. He replaced money with "labor notes" that allowed people to purchase things such as a pound of corn in exchange for an hour of physical labor. The experiment was designed to create a capitalist system in which no one got ripped off.

The store was actually very successful and threatened to place other Cincinnati stores out of business; some of his competitors even adopted Warren's system. So why did it only last three years? Weird Warren was not interested in making money, oh no, it would seem that The Cincinnati Time Store was merely the trial run for his economic experiment. In 1830, he closed up shop and moved on to start several intentional communities based on his newly proven system.

The most successful of Warren's anarchist colonies was Utopia, Ohio in Clermont County; however, now it is considered mostly a ghost town with its two dead end streets and virtual zero residence . . . but that's another story.



Josiah Warren

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Cincinnati Spoken Word Series Is A Success With Writers And The Wider Community

**MARK GRAUHUIS
& ROBBY WRIGHT**
Contributing Writers

Let's be honest: poetry readings are hardly everybody's cup of tea. Except, perhaps, for The Things that My Friends Say. TTTMFS is a spoken-word series that privileges creative Cincinnatians from a variety of disciplines, backgrounds, styles, and interests. It is held at CS13 Gallery on Main Street in Over-the-Rhine once a month, in an informal and non-academic setting, and is free and open to the public. The series features writers, some first timers, some seasoned and published, all interested in presenting their work to a new audience.

One problem that different "DIY" or creative communities often face is that they work rather well separately but seldom in conjunction. Interested in challenging common-held assumptions about literary events, TTTMFS has at times been an uncomfortable place for popular or established artists and performers, and a comfortable place for up-and-coming or unknown



A new approach to poetry as friends listen to things that friends have to say.

Photo: Mark Grauhaus

individuals interested in or inspired by the former: but both equally part of the evening's potential. Supplementing and sometimes even taking precedence over the actual readings, TTTMF features delightful unpretentious pre- or post-event discussions,

unobtrusive laughter, and the sharing of creative ideas. Forging a community of otherwise disparate artistic drives, it is one of the more welcoming regular events of its kind in the city.

This inviting atmosphere has been ably fostered by series-organizer Robby Wright, a sharp graduate from the punk music scene, who explains, "it is born out of my nascent and utopian idea that people can be, or should be, comfortable in doing something as uncomfortable as publicly reading their writing, or performing their

performances, in front of the members of their communities as well as others. It is born out a boredom for spaces that privilege one approach to expression and art-making; it is born out of a growing disinterest in seeing Cincinnati's go-to poetic heroes reading at events featuring out-of-town poets who get our full attention over and over again, when there are many, many people interested in being the center of that attention, in having their words published, in being part of that community, their community, beyond its margins."

Of particular note are the limited-run, complementary chapbooks featuring new or old works by previous participants of the series. These allow attendants to gather in an archive of contemporary Cincinnati writing, poetry or otherwise, and have included a bi-lingual edition featuring very fine South American poets. Of these books, Wright suggests that they "could considered a travesty for their artless smashing of styles and even "skill-levels" (if you want to go there)... for their "unliterariness," so to speak. I enjoy that." And so have audiences, who have slowly grown and grown together as faces become familiar and

conversations are started and taken up again each time.

At a time when so much poetic output has shifted to an online and highly privatized environment, it is refreshing to hear Wright's respect for what he notes as "the quiet, unpredictable, or even solemn atmosphere that reading events generate." "I especially wanted to eliminate the aspect of competition," he continues, "and the 'step-up-to-the-mic' vibe that comes with the territory in certain spaces. I wanted to put these aspiring (or not-so aspiring even) writers/performers side by side in readings, in the same publications".

"TTTMFS, hopefully, can be representative, or even more representative, of Cincinnati as a whole, rather than Cincinnati as various compartments and sects of creative energy and collectives. The "Friends" aspect of the series' title was meant to a little ironic; these painstakingly constructed works to be exhibited as simple "Things" "said," rather than professed, poeticized, performed even is too deliberately sardonic. I like utter simplicity of that concept, the lack of importance of who or what, but the belief in some understanding or, god-forbid, friendship, springing out of the often cold or unwelcoming environment as the "Art Space".

In this respect, the series has certainly been a success, bringing people together in such a way that one does not feel the imposition of a structure of an "us" (the audience) and a "them" (those smart-than-thou poets on stage). Each individual in the room, as a valued participant in the reading, performs a valuable service to the rest, who then take on the shape of a collective ear for the event, as words puncture and permeate the performance space and minds in unpredictable, often wonderfully anarchic ways. A reading that listens, then....

The series has earned a proud place alongside other notable local series past and present, and set a new bar for what other local events can hope to achieve.



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www.therustyball.com

To keep up with events at the gallery and to learn about the next reading, visit:
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/CS13/73151372200>

Megan Martin is a local poet who participates in the TTTMF series.

Why I am Not the Amazing Poetess

The amazing poetess wrote a sentence that gave me a dream where my ex was a torso hopping around in a bookstore where there were no good books, and where I was picking him up and hugging him and sobbing and feeling all the sadness in my life and his life at once.

The next morning I vowed to pull the same stunt the amazing poetess had pulled: inspire a suicide in a perfect stranger.

I wrote a story about Apple Jacks and turnstiles and barracuda roadkill in pink sunglasses smashed on the highway. I was not sure how to write something that would upheave anyone.

Meanwhile, the amazing poetess definitely believes in and/or trusts completely in her own perfect and original version of God. When she reaches, her God reaches back, like on the Sistine Chapel's ceiling.

When you and I were in Rome, I don't remember what happened, just that we didn't go or try to go to the Sistine Chapel. My memory, among other things, is toast. Probably we were drunk. And maybe we walked around town and looked at buildings and maybe shoes and I helped hold you up while we stumbled home.

This was the same thing we did every day in our town. I did not see a problem with this at the time. Or, rather: I did not have the guts to write it down.

I spin a yawn. I make a furry pinwheel of language that goes whoop-de-do in a lax breeze. It is what I like. It is a failure.

By Megan Martin

In Memory of the Grateful Dead

SUSAN LAKES
Staff Writer



Dawn Renee warms up with Jerry Garcia at a Grateful Dead concert at Folsom Stadium on the University of Colorado campus in the early '80s. *(Photo submitted by Dawn Renee).*

Jerry Garcia died of a heart attack 16 years ago this month.

Our request for memories of Garcia and Grateful Dead concerts yielded these responses.

A local guy said,

"I like them OK, had a couple of early albums, but I've only seen them once, at a really NOT typical Dead concert.

Let me "set the stage":

I grew up in the '60s in a San Francisco suburb. One year, my town had a concert series, which included the Modern Jazz Quartet, several other acts, and the Dead. This would likely have been either 1966 or '67.

This was so early in their career, they had probably only just changed their name from the Warlocks, and the venue was my local high school gym;

on the stage, but in front of the curtain!

That's right, one of the bands most noted for early huge elaborate equipment setups, was in a five foot deep area, using one amp each, and even used a combo organ (just the one keyboard).

I was escorted by my Dad, who liked quite a variety of music. However, the relatively empty gym was way too echo-ey, and he walked out, not because he didn't like them (he later said he'd enjoyed their music), but because it was hurting his ears.

He was not the only one who left; at least half the audience did.

Venue and reception unlike anything usually implied by a Dead concert."

A guy from Colorado said that while he didn't have any special Dead stories about the band or the concert, he was a normal, "I'll see you when you're here" fan. He worked as an electrician at the University of Colorado's Folsom Field. About the band, he said the Dead had the best group of roadies and that Jerry himself would always be available to hang out and talk with anyone, unlike was the case with some other groups.

Not the Dead. "But the Dead along with Santana or Bonnie Raitt were always real people who appreciated the fans and crew."

Further, this fan got a surprise after the show ended. It seems that he and another person were very surprised to find a regular five foot tall dressing mirror laid out on a table in Garcia's room. It was almost entirely covered with a white powdery substance. "Obviously left for the tear down guys," the fan surmised. "Always thinking of others. What a guy."

Another Coloradan who now lives in California said she remembers the craziness at the Folsom concert that was sometime in 1981. Jerry had just gotten a new tiger wood guitar and was showing it off, she recalls. She shared some concert photos.



Jerry Garcia's Tiger wood guitar. Folsom Stadium on the University of Colorado campus in the early '80s. *(Photo submitted by Dawn Renee).*

Outside the Loop: Ghost Hunting for the Spook Lights

JESSICA HOPSICKER
Contributing Writer

Southwest Ohio is rife with legend everything from haunted highways and bridges and midget houses to hatchet wielding maniacs. Satanic rituals, hangings, massacres, more than one baby being thrown off a bridge. An astounding number of automobile, bicycle and motorcycle fatalities and other various nefarious occurrences have helped propagate these tall tales. There is so much of this perverse lore in Butler County alone that is hard to keep track of it all. "The Screaming Bridge of Maude Hughes Road" in West Chester, for instance, and the equally notorious "Crybaby Bridge" on Fudge Road in Gratis, are just two of the supposedly haunted bridges in the area. The "Phantom Bicyclist of Buckley Road" is a legend that just about any other town in America holds of transient lights of the deceased. This tale is often times confused with quite possibly the most infamous, widely reported and documented haunting of them all, the "Oxford Light" at the corner of Earhart and Milford Oxford Road.

Armed with cameras, a digital voice recorder, Google maps, and cell phone app designed to commune with the dead, my roommates Mary Anne and Larry and I cut a 90 mile loop from West Chester to Gratis

and over to Oxford in search of the supernatural and just plain creepy. What started out as an assignment to simply check out the famed "Oxford Light" turned out to be six hour tour through Southwest Ohio's back roads. It appeared we opened a Pandora's Box of the paranormal. There was Hickory Flats Cemetery



Paranormal activity or merely tales that capture our imagination? *Photo: Mary Ann McClusky*

where unfortunate caretaker making his nightly rounds was brutally murdered by a hatchet wielding maniac. Dressed in dirty old clothes his ghost still haunts the cemetery carrying the very hatchet that killed him. The notorious Wehr Road itself where the cemetery is located Trenton is teeming with tales of black clad Satan Worshipers, sacrifices, and even mass murder. All we saw was corn. From there we ventured to the infamous and rather impassable Fudge Road, where the locals clearly

really don't want tourists. Needless to say we didn't stay long enough at Crybaby Bridge to call out "Mama" three times, and hear the poor infant's ghostly wails. We almost ended our trip in a jail cell. From there we set out to west to Oxford stopping to commune with the demons at the "Devil's Backbone" in Camden. Words popped up on the cell phone app like "payment" and "sacrifice" after considerable questioning and demands for the spirit of this notoriously cursed land to show itself. We tossed a quarter into the forest next to the ravine and left somewhat disappointed that nothing further happened. There was Hopewell Cemetery outside Hueston Woods, where it has been said that bad luck or even a spirit follows after you've ventured there at night. "Please wait," the cell phone app read so we drove back around and did in hopes to pick up a ghostly hitchhiker to bring on the rest of our excursion. Then it was off to Buckley Road where nothing happened.

Ironically, the "Oxford Light" was the only location where we did in fact witness something. The side of the road was marked with no parking signs. Over thirty years of sightings have accumulated, countless observers from college students to paranormal groups. We didn't even have to flash our headlights on three times as local legend states to sum-

mon the spook lights. Sure enough, shortly after we stopped the car, a rather bright ball of light bounced and bobbed in the distance along the significantly hill-ridden road. There was only one of them bearing a faint halogen glow. Was it really the ghost of the young man on a motorcycle perpetually doomed to drive to his girlfriends house for all eternity? Rumor has it he was decapitated by a barbed wire fence after missing the ninety degree turn where Earhart and Oxford Milford Road meet. Perhaps it was distant headlights reflecting off the sun baked pavement. Rarely an actual car followed. We attempted to follow it once to where it stops at the girl's house where she signaled her star-crossed lover. There just so happened to be another vehicle ahead of us doing the very same thing.

We closed out our amateur ghost hunting adventure in West Chester at the "Screaming Bridge of Maude Hughes Road." Road weary and tired of waiting we decided to leave and head to the pub to get a pitcher of beer and go over our findings before the bars closed. After carving out a sizable chunk of Southwest West Ohio, we barely begun uncover all the myths and monsters that surround the area. The motorcycle ghost was the only one we deemed plausible, the rest it seemed as always, that legends were far more convoluted and interesting than reality.

HOOLIEO

I ain't Hoolieo I heard somebody say
I ain't out here conning and tricking people for a raise in pay
I'm trying to give others respect as I want for myself
I'm trying to keep my lively hood open to the hand I've been dealt

I ain't Hoolieo I heard another person say
I ain't making up fairy tales trying to get sympathy for money today
I'm trying to be honest to people I meet along the street
I'm trying to receive God's blessing with each heart beat

I ain't Hoolieo I finally shouted clear out loud
I rebuke thee Hoolie and vanquish thee from my mind up to the clouds
So if things are not going your way and you feel a Hoolieo attack coming on
An urge to con, trick or lie to people for pay, just kick Hoolieo to the curb and curse the day he was born!

By Willa Denise Jones

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Kymber Henson * Barbara Houghton *Jimi Jones * Jerry Judge
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Paulette Meier * Kelly Phelps * Kyle Phelps * Tom Phelps * Ellen Price
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FROZEN

by P.E. Quince

Sitting; on the pavement back against the wall, her small tattered hand, and five fingers, raised palm up, facing up towards.

“GOD.”

Sitting there prayerful that, “GOD” will appear in that tattered, worn out hand.....

Stretched out; reaching, frozen in time, her arm, Seared and writhed by so long a life under the unforgiving sun. Frail, so fragile it seems a miracle that the breeze doesn't break it. The multitude of visible vines, are the road map of her life. A life, which has been lived in the poverty, of this, our world.

Her hair,

Long, unkempt but clean, parted in the center, and pulled back its length hiding in her blouse.

The color, Grey, textured like straw, it frames her head, and her face, her face, once beautiful now, like old leather, dark and hollow, showing the strain, and her afflictions. She holds no expression at all.

Her eyes,

Unmoving regarding only the frozen hand that is turned up to “GOD” stretched out from the frozen arm. Maybe today “GOD” will take her hand maybe today he will embrace her? How long has she been longing for Him to come?

Her face,

Speaks, of her life, sixty, maybe seventy years old, maybe late forty's? Her husband dead or just vanished, eight or nine children, all departed to live there, lives. Leaving, her, to her strength and to her, almost nothingness. One of twelve or thirteen, growing up, a slave to her family, always a slave to her household, cooking and cleaning at age four or five, Learning under the heavy hand, of her, father, mother, husband, grandmother and children, Crying, crying in the hell that she was born in to.

Sex,

Sex came, suddenly, all too early, not gently, not lovingly, a tender, secret age. Then, married, at thirteen or fifteen, walking, running shoeless, miles each and every day of her life, feet as tuff as her love of GOD, never a pair of shoes, her secret wish, to someday own a pair of shoes, maybe with a pair of shoes she would become somebody, maybe with a pair of shoes she would, just be seen? But eating, a bowl of rice twice a week is so much more vital. That it will stay only a dream, forever a dream. Praying, that if she like, Jesus lives a good life and suffers, like Jesus, that “GOD” may give her, shoes in paradise, so that she, may be seen by the angles.

Her blouse, Her skirt,

Handmade by her, like all of her clothing, and hand washed, hundreds of times. But, silently displaying, the stains, of years, of use. Old and out of date, just like her.

GOD,

“GOD”, who, appears in her palm as I.....

Walk by.



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Shelter: Women and Children

Central Access Point	381-SAFE
Cincinnati Union Bethel	768-6907
300 Lytle Street, Cinti, Ohio 45202	
Bethany House	557-2873
1841 Fairmount Ave, Cinti, Ohio 45214	
Grace Place Catholic Worker House	681-2365
6037 Cary Ave, Cinti, Ohio 45224	
Salvation Army	762-5660
131 E. 12th Street, Cinti, Ohio 45202	
YWCA Battered Women’s Shelter	872-9259

Shelter: Men

City Gospel Mission	241-5525
1419 Elm Street, Cinti, Ohio 45202	
Justice Watch	241-0490
St. Fran/St. Joe Catholic Work. House	381-4941
1437 Walnut Street, Cinti, Ohio 45202	
Mt. Airy Shelter	661-4620

Shelter: Both

Anthony House (Youth)	961-4080
2728 Glendora Ave, Cinti, Ohio 45209	
Caracole (HIV/AIDS)	761-1480
1821 Summit Road, Cinti, Ohio 45237	
Drop Inn Center	721-0643
217 W. 12th Street, Cinti, Ohio 45202	
Interfaith Hospitality Network	471-1100
Lighthouse Youth Center (Youth)	221-3350
3330 Jefferson, Cinti, Ohio 45220	

Housing:

CMHA	721-4580
Excel Development	632-7149
OTR Community Housing	381-1171
114 W. 14th Street, Cinti, Ohio 45202	
Tender Mercies	721-8666
27 W. 12th Street, Cinti, Ohio 45202	
Tom Geiger House	961-4555
Dana Transitional Bridge Services	751-0643
Volunteers of America	381-1954
Anna Louise Inn	421-5211

Food/Clothing

Lord’s Pantry	621-5300
OTR/Walnut Hills Kitchen & Pantry	961-1983
OTR: 1620 Vine Street, Cinti, Ohio 45202	
Walnut Hills: 2631 Gilbert, Cinti, Ohio 45206	
Our Daily Bread	621-6364
1730 Race Street, Cinti, Ohio 45202	

St. Francis Soup Kitchen	535-2719
Churches Active in Northside	591-2246
4230 Hamilton Ave, Cinti, Ohio 45223	
FreeStore/FoodBank	241-1064
112 E. Liberty Street, Cinti, Ohio 45202	
Madisonville Ed & Assistance Center	271-5501
4600 Erie Ave, Cinti, Ohio 45227	
Serves area codes: 45226, 45227, 45208, 45209	
St. Vincent de Paul	562-8841
1125 Bank Street, Cinti, Ohio 45214	

Treatment: Men

Charlie’s 3/4 House	784-1853
2121 Vine Street, Cinti, Ohio 45202	
Prospect House	921-1613
682 Hawthorne Ave, Cinti, Ohio 45205	
Starting Over	961-2256

Treatment: Women

First Step Home	961-4663
2203 Fulton, Cinti, Ohio 45206	

Treatment: Both

AA Hotline	351-0422
CCAT	381-6672
830 Ezzard Charles Dr. Cinti, Ohio 45214	
Joseph House (Veterans)	241-2965
1522 Republic Street, Cinti, Ohio 45202	
Hamilton County ADAS Board	946-4888
Recovery Health Access Center	281-7422
Sober Living	681-0324
Talbert House	641-4300

Advocacy

Catholic Social Action	421-3131
Community Action Agency	569-1840
Contact Center	381-4242
1227 Vine Street, Cinti, Ohio 45202	
Franciscan JPIC	721-4700
Gr. Cinti Coalition for the Homeless	421-7803
117 E. 12th Street, Cinti, Ohio 45202	
Intercommunity Justice & Peace Cr.	579-8547
Legal Aid Society	241-9400
Ohio Justice & Policy Center	421-1108
Faces Without Places	363-3300

Health

Center for Respite Care	621-1868
3550 Washington Ave, Cinti, Ohio 45229	

Crossroad Health Center	381-2247
5 E. Liberty St. Cinti, Ohio 45202	
Health Resource Center	357-4602
Homeless Mobile Health Van	352-2902
McMicken Dental Clinic	352-6363
40 E. McMicken Ave, Cinti, Ohio 45202	
Mental Health Access Point	558-8888
Mercy Franciscan at St. John	981-5800
1800 Logan St. Cinti, Ohio 45202	
NAMI of Hamilton County	458-6670
PATH Outreach	977-4489

Other Resources

Center Independent Living Options	241-2600
Emmanuel Community Center	241-2563
1308 Race St. Cinti, Ohio 45202	
Peaslee Neighborhood Center	621-5514
214 E. 14th St. Cinti, Ohio 45202	
Franciscan Haircuts from the Heart	381-0111
1800 Logan St. Cinti, Ohio 45202	
Goodwill industries	771-4800
Healing Connections	751-0600
Mary Magdalen House	721-4811
1223 Main St. Cinti, Ohio 45202	
People Working Cooperatively	351-7921
The Caring Place	631-1114
United Way	211
Women Helping Women	977-5541
Off The Streets	421-5211

Hamilton/Middletown

St. Raephaels	863-3184
Salvation Army	863-1445
Serenity House Day Center	422-8555
Open Door Pantry	868-3276

Northern Kentucky

Brighton Center	859-491-8303
799 Ann St. Newport, KY	
ECHO/Hosea House	859-261-5857
Fairhaven Resuce Mission	859-491-1027
Homeward Bound Youth	859-581-1111
Mathews House	859-261-8009
Homeless & Housing Coalition	859-727-0926
Parish Kitchen	859-581-7745
Pike St. Clinic	859-291-9321
Transitions, Inc	859-491-4435
Welcome House of NKY	859-431-8717
205 West Pike Street, Covington, KY 41011	
Women’s Crisis Center	859-491-3335
VA Domiciliary	859-559-5011
VA Homeless	859-572-6226

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“Artists as Activists”: A Two-Year Anniversary and Farewell

And may the artist activist live and grow in each of us

I have been blessed in the past two years to become familiar with the personal path and reflective artwork of many of our local artists who use their art to speak of themselves; of their values, beliefs, and concerns; of their quest for peace and social justice; of their dreams for a better world. I have been honored to make their voice heard and share it with the many readers of *Streetvibes*, this journal, through the regular semimonthly column “Artists as Activists” I have been writing since September 2009. The initial title of my column included in addition, and as subtitle, “Art for Life,” an accurate qualifier I reluctantly, however, had to omit for economy of words. These artists, in fact, perceived and created art not for the sake of art per se, but rather for their own sake, for the sake of their life and that of life in general.

Artists as Activists

SAAD GHOSN
Contributing Writer

Forty-four visual artists, four poets and writers and one singer/songwriter graciously accepted, through informal exchanges, to reveal themselves,



Saad Ghosn waving good bye to the readers of his column “Artists as Activists”. **Photo: Bill Howes**

uncover their past and present, and lead us through the meaning and purpose of their creative work. I am very thankful for the special and personalized perspective each offered us. Even though espousing different paths and approaches and using varying means and media, they all aimed through their art at enhancing our humanity, improving society, advancing our world. Their topics were diverse, yet converged in their focus towards freedom, equality, truth, spirituality, understanding, individual rights... They spoke variably but also in unison for the protection of the abused child; the empowerment of the weak, the oppressed and the “invisible” in our society; the equal and independent rights of women, gays and minorities; the abolishing of wars; an empathic solution to street violence and the negation of all violence; the respect of the environment; the well being of animals; the appreciation of diversity; the peaceful growing of communities... Most importantly they pleaded for justice, peace and compassion for every living creature, also for the kind and loving treatment of our mother earth.

I had the pleasure week after week to listen to their thoughts, accompany them in their questioning and concerns, become moved and inspired by the strength and power of their creative expression. I had also the privilege to share, and each time with anxious anticipation, my discoveries with you, the reader. I am sad to say, however, that as of this issue, I will not be doing it anymore. This issue celebrates the two-year anniversary of my column, two years of joy, excitement and tribulations, in part thanks to you

the readers, many of whom gave me encouragement and reinforcing appreciation along the way. It is time for me to tackle other responsibilities; I have to say good bye and I will be missing you...

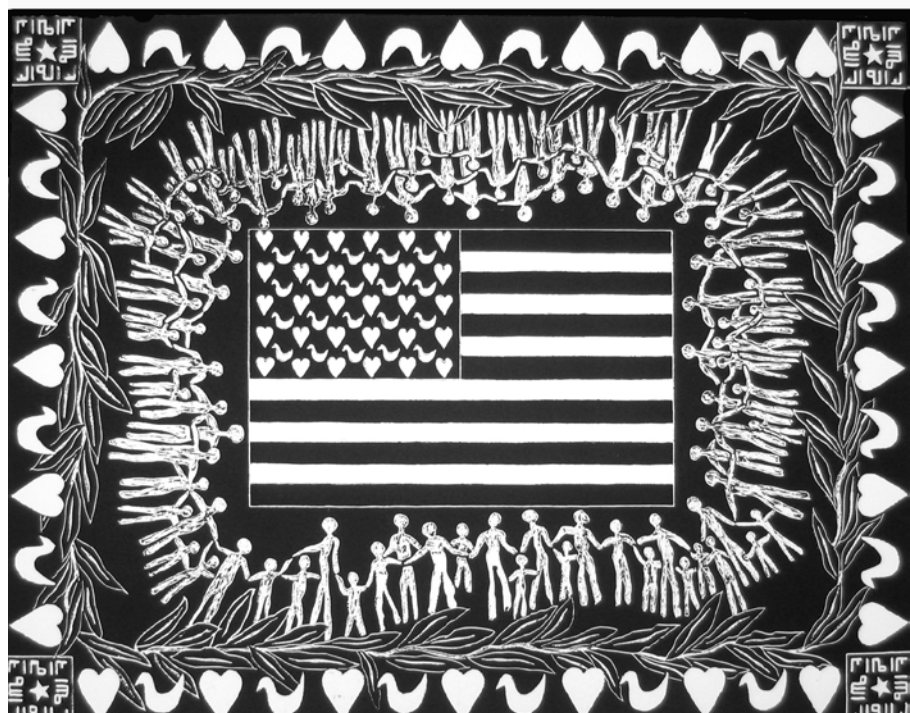
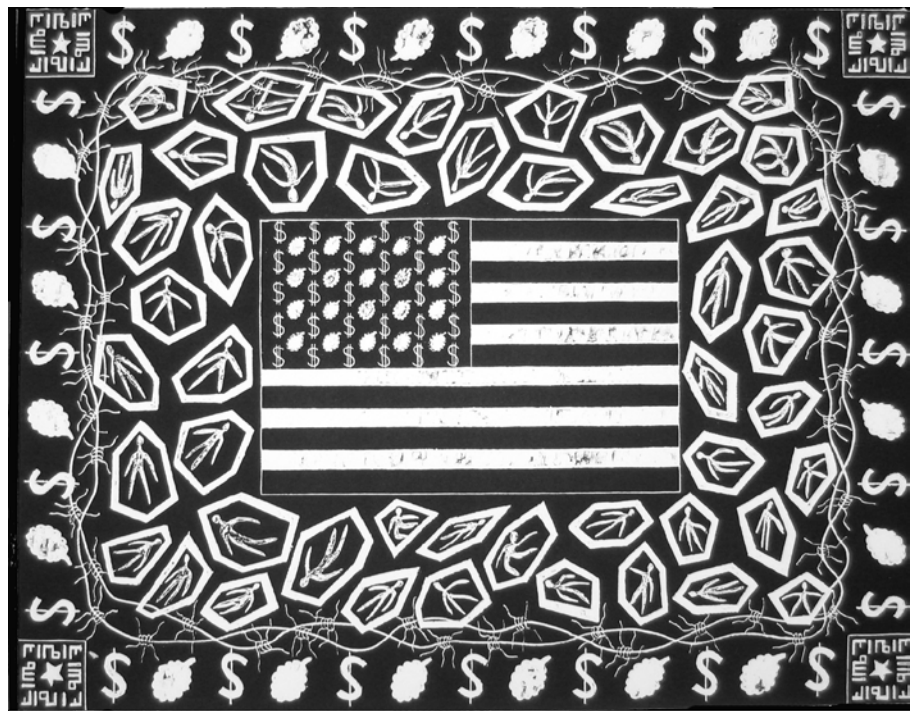
I dare hope, however, that the end of my column is not effectively its end. I would like it and the living example of the many featured artists to have opened a little window, triggered a different change, challenged the daily passive status quo, planted the seeds of an artist activist in each of us. Let these anticipated transformations grow and let us all become the committed persons who will use their talents, whatever they are, to make a difference and contribute to the bettering of this world. The featured artists all along reminded us that this was everyone's responsibility, that each voice counted, but also that it needed to be nurtured in order to grow loud and strong and add beauty and harmony to the symphony of life.

Living in the United States of America we may be led to believe that our government is the sole actor in the shaping of our politics, and indirectly in deciding the fate of our existence. As engaged citizens, however, we should never forget that our active role can be crucial in determining the direction our country takes, the values and structure our society espouses, the goals we choose for our lives, the messages we send to the rest of the world. We are each responsible in the molding of our flag. It can be a flag based on material values, money, military control, greed, class divisions and inequities; or on the contrary one reigned by the spiritual values of understanding, sharing, giving, equality, respect and love. The first sadly will lead us to isolation, violence and death, away from our inner self; the latter, on the other hand, to connectedness, community building, compassion for each other and the environment, justice, peace and harmony. It is our choice to make. It is definitely our call to become activists in the building and shaping of our lives and of life in general.

May the activist artist prevail in each of us!

Good bye, so long, and always, **for a better world!!!**

An anniversary exhibit to include works by the artists who have been featured in the column will take place at the Artisans Enterprise Center (AEC), 27 West 7th Street, in Covington. It opens Friday, August 5, 6 - 10pm (Opening Reception) and closes Friday, September 23, 6 - 9pm (Closing Party). Regular hours: Monday to Friday, 9am - 5pm. Please come and visit.



Flag I and Flag II, woodcut prints by Saad Ghosn. **Photo: Saad Ghosn**

Artists as Activists has been a regular column highlighting Greater Cincinnati artists who use art as a vehicle for change. Saad Ghosn is the founder of SOS Art. Ghosn can be reached at saad.ghosn@uc.edu.